



MARCH – APRIL 2000

The Placer is produced and edited by the
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MUSEUM DIRECTOR'S NOTES BY JERRY ROUILLARD

Preserving Historic Cemeteries



Lonestar Cemetery north of Auburn

More and more people are coming to realize that California has not done a very good job of protecting its historic cemeteries. This is the message that Dr. Bob LaPerriere of Sacramento is taking to the State's historic organizations, and it is a message that is causing a lot of people to sit up and take notice. Dr. Bob is one of the founders of Sacramento's Old City Cemetery Committee. He and a group of other historic cemetery supporters recently put together an organization called the *California Historic Cemetery Alliance* to address the plight of our historic, pioneer cemeteries.

Although they have a broad range of long-term goals, the current focus of the Alliance is support for State legislation that would create a California Pioneer Cemetery Commission. This Commission would be

charged with the historic preservation of these cemeteries. Its tasks would include settling jurisdictional disputes and helping direct local volunteer efforts to restore and protect historic cemeteries. It would also make recommendations to the legislature regarding cemetery improvements and laws to protect them.

The legislation that will address these issues is contained in Assembly Bill 1779, authored by Sacramento Assemblyman Anthony Pescetti. As described in the Legislative Counsel's Digest, *"This bill would establish the California Pioneer Cemetery Commission with a specified membership appointed by the Governor, and prescribed duties related to pioneer cemeteries. The bill would define a pioneer cemetery as a public cemetery with six or more burial sites dating before January 1, 1901."* Additional information on the bill is available from Pescetti's office at the State Capitol Room 2130, or by fax request to (916) 319-2010. Pescetti can also be reached by email at anthony.pescetti@asm.ca.gov.

Placer County has its share of historic cemeteries, and people like Auburn's Jim and Melinda Landrith are already helping make us aware of their value as cultural resources. Their annual cemetery tours are increasingly popular and well attended. Unfortunately, this awareness is not building as fast as are the threats from development pressures and general neglect.

As a means of supporting the California Historic Cemetery Alliance, and at the same time getting a sense of what we have right here in Placer County, our current Historical Advisory Board Chair, Sandy Elder, has asked the help of the County Historical Organizations Committee in developing a registry of our historic cemeteries. At our last meeting, we passed out a registration form and asked each organization's representative to use the forms to let our Department

know about historic cemeteries in their area. By mid-summer, we hope to have enough information to prepare a database of the cemeteries that might benefit by the Pescetti legislation.

In addition to the historic organizations, we would appreciate the help of anyone who knows of a historic cemetery that should be listed on a countywide registry. We have copies of the registration form here at our Museums Administrative office in the Historic Courthouse. We will be happy to send you one if you give us a call at (530) 889-6500. You can also email me at jrouilla@placer.ca.gov.

Preserving historic cemeteries has many benefits. On one hand, protecting them shows respect for the pioneers who made California history. In a more pragmatic sense, these cemeteries are valuable and attractive historic resources with considerable research value for historians and genealogists. Perhaps most importantly, they are also an irreplaceable part of our cultural heritage and our sense of historical identity. Recognized and intact, our historic cemeteries make our communities feel like more secure and permanent places.

There has never been a better time to get involved in preserving Placer County's historic cemeteries. There are a number of ways you can help. You can help us create the county registry of our historic cemeteries by sending in a historic cemetery registration form. You can support the Pescetti bill by writing a letter or sending an email to a Local State legislator. You can even join the California Historic Cemetery Alliance (phone [916] 481-4525, or email chca@inreach.com). If you want to do a little investigation before you take any of these activist steps, we would recommend a visit to the Folsom Museum's current exhibit on historic cemeteries. We would also recommend a tour of Sacramento's Old City Cemetery. Their web site is www.jps.net/occc/cemetery.htm, or you can call for information at (916) 448-0811.

Let's face it, most of us are going to get involved with a cemetery at some point. Why not do it while we can still enjoy it!

PLACER COUNTY HISTORICAL ORGANIZATIONS COMMITTEE

The next meeting of the Placer County Historical Organizations Committee will be held on Tuesday, April 11th from 9 a.m. to Noon at the Loomis Library.

The agenda for the meeting will be prepared and sent to the representatives two weeks before the meeting. If you wish to propose an item for the next agenda, please contact Jerry Rouillard at the Museums Administrative Office, Telephone 530-889-6500, Fax 530 889-6510, by Monday, March 27th.

PLACER COUNTY MUSEUMS' UPCOMING EXHIBITS AND EVENTS BY DORIS PARKER

Communications Exhibit Revision

As the Museums staff discussed options for adding the Placer Herald press into the Placer County Museum Gallery, we realized that we had an opportunity to redesign our Communications exhibit into something really special.

We have decided to conduct a major renovation of the exhibit to address the development of communication in Placer County from the Native American period up through our current era.

We are planning to open this exhibit at the beginning of September.

Since this exhibit will be the focus of our efforts over the spring and summer months, the next phase of the *We Came for Gold* exhibit will be delayed until the end of the year.

Prize Winning Exhibit Comes to the Gold Country Museum

The mining display portion of Placer County's 1998 State Fair exhibit, which won *Best of Show*, has been installed in the Gold Country Museum. This section of the exhibit includes the mountain module that represented Placer County during the gold rush days. Animated action figures depict various mining techniques and activities of the era and display windows feature some period artifacts.

This well crafted exhibit adds a new dimension to the Gold Country Museum and has proved to be popular with children of all ages.

The museum is open Tuesday – Friday from 10 – 3:30 and weekends from 11 – 4. Drop in and see this new feature.



One section of the Gold Country Museum's new exhibit.

Fraternal Organization Exhibit Planned for the Golden Drift Museum

Members of the Golden Drift Historical Society and the Museums staff are working together to present a new exhibit on local fraternal orders at the Golden Drift Museum in Dutch Flat. This spring the first of a series of exhibits on fraternal orders will feature the Knights of Pythias. The exhibit is scheduled to be completed by the museum's grand opening on Memorial Day weekend.

Living History Program Gears Up for spring

Mother Nature granted the Bernhard Living History program a perfect pre-spring day to provide training to the parents and teachers who will assist with this spring's living history days.

The program, which is conducted by the Placer County Museum Docent Guild and sponsored by the Department of Museums, provides third grade students with the opportunity to learn about the customs and lifestyles of our community in the late 1800's.



This popular program, now in its fourth season, has been booked since last spring.

Schools wishing to participate in the program for the school year of 2000/2001 should contact the Department of Museums at 530-889-6504 for further information.

Docent Training Classes Offered

The Placer County Department of Museums will be holding Docent Training Classes for Auburn's three museums on Thursday afternoons from 1:30 – 4:00 beginning on April 6th. The schedule of classes follows:

April 6th - Native American Culture;
Placer County Museum

April 13th - The Formation of Communities & Industries
Placer County Museum

April 20th - The History of Transportation
Placer County Museum

May 4th - Telling Our Story, The Art of
Interpretation
Placer County Museum

May 11th - Bernhard Complex History
Bernhard Museum

May 18th - Victorian Culture and Furnishings
Bernhard Museum

May 25th - Giving Fantastic Tours
Bernhard Museum

June 1st - The Gold Rush & Mining History
Gold Country Museum

June 8th - Geology & Mining Techniques
Gold Country Museum

June 15th - Gold Panning, Gambling & Giving
Tours
Gold Country Museum

An Old Auburn Walking Tour class will also be held later this spring. Watch for announcements on the time and starting place for this class.

For further information on the Docent classes, please call the Department of Museums at 530-889-6500.

BY WORD OF MOUTH AL ALBERTAZZI

On Thursday, November 18th, Collections Curator, Chris Hughes and I met with 94 year-old Mary Bianco and her 84 year-old brother, Peter Osella, to gather an oral history to accompany their donation of a complete blacksmith shop, now displayed at the Bernhard Museum. Mrs. Bianco was active and lively and full of information about the shop and about life in early Roseville.

Her father, Peter Osella Sr., had worked for mining companies in Boise, Idaho, and Tonopah, Nevada, before bringing the family to Roseville in 1906 when he got a job blacksmithing for the old Pacific Fruit Express, which later was sold to the Southern Pacific Railroad. Within a few years, he opened his own blacksmith shop, shoeing horses and repairing equipment for various Roseville businesses.

One of his better customers was the Livotti Olive Oil Company, which frequently hired him to repair broken equipment or to fashion new pieces for ones that had worn out. This was in the days before electric welders, and the pieces of metal to be joined and shaped had to be heated to incandescence and worked with hammer and tong.

When business was slow, Osella would build homes that he rented out in the section of Roseville then called "Little Italy" where one could walk into the Roma bakery and buy a loaf of freshly baked bread for a nickel.

Mrs. Bianco talked of her father's skill in repairing almost anything made of metal and she recounted the times she spent in her father's shop turning the handle of the blower that fanned the forge. She spoke of the horse and buggy traffic on Atlantic Street, of cooling off in the clear water of the nearby creek, and of walking to Rocklin through fields of poppies in the springtime. The time we spent with her was a delight, and I gathered more of a sense of the times than any history book could give me.



Peter Osella and his Cousin, Circa 1900

VOICES FROM THE PAST BY DORIS PARKER

This editorial from the *Los Angeles Herald* was reprinted in the *Placer Herald*, April 27, 1895. The content of the piece could have been written a hundred years later. I thought you would enjoy another example that life really hasn't changed as much as we sometimes think.

Why They Do Not Marry

"Of all the sad words of tongue or pen, The saddest are these: 'Where are the men?'"

So sings a charming young lady with marriageable qualifications. For almost a decade of ordinary observation, reinforced by carefully collected statistics, has discovered the alarming fact that the rate of marital

alliances is diminishing. And the why and the wherefore of this has become the subject of speculation with sociologists and philosophers, as well as with unallied maidens. Certainly the average of the latter are no less attractive than heretofore. Art and science have both been enlisted in the task of assisting nature to amplify their charms of person; and no one possessing any degree of acquaintance with them, will dispute the assertion that in grace of manner, and in the diversity and utility of their accomplishments they have commensurately advanced.

And nobody will contend that the general run of young men of today are less interesting than their predecessors. The average of intelligence among them is higher than their sires. They dress better, have fewer vices, are more refined in conduct and speech, and more widely endowed with entertaining qualities, and even seem to be just as virulently afflicted as their ancestors, with the old, old habit of hovering around the gentle sex. The elements of affinity are seemingly present, And yet the men and maidens to not wed – enough.

It may be that the success and facility with which women have invaded the industrial and commercial fields formerly monopolized by men has disinclined them to enter upon a relation that seems to mean the merging of their individuality into that of another. This is unquestionably true of that class who before married a man because they "had to have a home". And while this participation of women in those callings that were so long considered purely masculine, may have the effect of subduing or altogether eliminating some of the most lovable features of feminine character, it is immeasurably preferable to martial relations enforced by necessity....

Marriages of the latter class are as immoral principal and as disappointing in results as the matrimonial barter by which the daughters of American plutocrats acquire the club-worn aristocrats of England and the continent. There is but one consideration in the contract of marriage that will endure the test of time and scrutiny of the world, and that is simple, unalloyed, mutual affection. Woman's ability to make a living nowadays outside the household has largely obviated the need of her consenting to any other kind of matrimony.

On the other hand certain social conditions have operated to deter young men from rushing too precipitately into a state of wedlock. The rapid accumulation of large fortunes in the last quarter of a century has altered both individual status and social standards. We have set up a new standard of success. The standard of things as substitute for the old one of virtue and character. It is the ability to estimate possessions that counts, and he who can estimate the longest seems to be greatest. In the race for display, barbaric show often, is developed the craze of wealth, and the latter becomes the goal of ambition. Happiness seems to be found only in the stately mansions, brilliant jewels, costly apparel and extravagant social function, instead of

as before in comfortable homes, cultivated intellects, family affections and congenial and sincere friends.

That the eyes of a large proportion of our young women are set steadily upon this latter-day standard is made evident by the fact that it is almost as difficult for an American bachelor of means to escape matrimony's net as it is for a nobleman of extraordinary title to miss an American heiress. Young men realize this adsorbing importance that wealth has assumed in the estimation of the young women of the day, and quite naturally hesitate at the assumption of obligations that may swamp them.

DOLL TREASURES OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

The Sierra Doll Discovery Club will present their annual doll show, *Doll Treasures of the Twentieth Century* on Saturday, April 1st from 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. at the Gold Country Fairgrounds in Auburn.

This year's show will feature an educational exhibit of dolls made between 1900 – 2000. The hundred years of dolls will include bisque, china, composition, and plastic creations that were popular in various eras of the last century.

The show will also provide numerous vendors selling dolls, doll accessories, miniatures, and other related items.

Whether you attend to buy or just to browse and reminisce, this is an event you won't want to miss.

ANSEL ADAMS' PHOTOGRAPHS AT THE CROCKER ART MUSEUM

The Crocker Art Museum is currently holding an exhibition of Ansel Adams photographs entitled *The Museum Set*. The show is drawn from the collections of SBC Communications, Pacific Bell's parent company, and will be on display through July 9th.

This collection was chosen by Ansel Adams during the last years of his life and includes many of his most famous and revered photographs.

The Crocker Art Museum is located at 216 O Street in Sacramento. They are open Tuesdays – Sundays from 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. and Thursday evenings until 9 p.m. For more information, please call 916-264-5423.

CURRENT EXHIBITS AT THE OAKLAND MUSEUM OF CALIFORNIA

The Oakland Museum of California has some exciting temporary exhibits scheduled for this spring.

On display through May 28th is *California Underground: Our Caves and Subterranean Habitats*, an exhibit that explores the diverse types of caves located in California. This exhibit features simulated caves and interactive material for children on caves and bats.

Two exhibits on quilts and quilting open this month and run through July 23rd. *Women of Taste: A Collaboration Celebrating Quilt Artists & Chefs* is a Smithsonian travelling exhibit featuring fifty contemporary quilts created by textile artists in collaboration with renowned women chefs. The quilts vary in appearance from traditional to abstract and experimental in form and design. Textures and colors are combined in fabric, as they are in fine food, to emphasize the aesthetic dimensions of culinary and textile arts.

The second exhibit, *Crazy Quilts*, is a presentation of ten quilts from the Oakland Museum's own collections.

In the Natural History Gallery, *Treasures of the Tar Pits* will be on display from April 1st – June 25th. This exhibit combines fossils from the La Brea Tarpits with video and interactive components.

Finally the Art Gallery features *California Classic: Realist Paintings by Robert Bechtle* from May 6th – October 1st.

The Oakland Museum of California is located at 10th and Oak Streets in Oakland, California. Their hours are Wednesday – Saturday from 10 – 5 p.m. and Sunday from Noon – 5 p.m. They can be reached at 1-888-625-6873 or at 510-238-2200. Their web site is www.museumca.org.

WORKS OF GEORGIA O'KEEFFE ON DISPLAY

Georgia O'Keeffe: The Poetry of Things is currently on display at the Palace of the Legion of Honor. This show, organized by the Phillips Collection of Washington D.C. and the Dallas Museum of Art, concentrates on O'Keeffe's paintings of objects. The fifty-four paintings included in this exhibit are considered to be some of her finest work.

The Palace of the Legion of Honor is located at 100 34th Avenue in San Francisco. They are open Tuesdays – Sundays from 9:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. This exhibit is featured through May 14th.

PLACER COUNTY MUSEUM GIFT SHOP BY DONNA HOWELL

In the book, *Overland in 1846, Diaries and Letters of the California Oregon Trail*, Volume I, they quote articles

from the Oregon Spectator written by Jesse Applegate (brother of our Lisbon) as a rebuttal to the slander he suffered because of the disaster on the Applegate Cutoff. It includes writings by another brother, Lindsay, also first hand records of the Donner Party and rescue parties, one by Daniel Rhoads. Volume 2 contains articles and letters from C.T. Stanton, the Donners, and Applegate.

Sacramento, Gold Rush Legacy, Metropolitan Destiny is a history of Sacramento County. The first chapter, "In the Beginning" about the formation of the valley and Indian residence is written by our own member, Norman Wilson. This book was published by the same company sponsoring a new history of Placer County being written by Chuck Myer due out in September.

I have two copies of *The Clark Ashton Smith Centennial Conference*. A group gathered at the Beecher Room to celebrate what would have been his 100th birthday in 1993. This publication contains some of Clark's work, comments from his friends, a letter from Violet Nelson Heyer on his family and color photographs of some of Clark's art.

Eleanor Briggs has compiled and printed letters belonging to her cousin in manuscript form. *Letters of James M. Gibson to his parents, 1850 – 1852* tell of his early life in New York, his trip to California and his panning for gold on the American River near here.

An attorney bought a copy of the *History of Placer County*, 1882 to use for reference. it provided information to him on who owned property in Iowa Hill and the mining laws of that time still apply today.

Addah started a full time job the day before she was scheduled to start here on Tuesdays so I have to make other arrangements.

PLACER COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE BY GEORGE LAY

Most of us have been involved in genealogical research and realized that the most complete source of documents exist as the result of the federal census.

The dictionary defines census as an official enumeration of the inhabitants of a county.

The first census in the United States started on the first Monday in August 1790 as directed by our Constitution Article 1, Section 2. The number of representatives in the House of Representatives to which each state was entitled was based on the population of each state. The census was required to determine the population.

It must have been somewhat difficult for the enumerators (census takers) to obtain information as our country was only one year old! At that time the decennial census asked the name of the head of the household of citizens of the thirteen States. Other information included: the number of free white males under the age of 16 in the household, the number of free white males age 16 and older, the number of free white females, the number of all other free persons, and the number of slaves.

On April 1, 2000, the 22nd United States Census will be held. Not only will every living soul be counted in the entire United States, but those in Puerto Rico, American Samoa, Guam, Northern Mariana Islands, the Virgin Islands of the United States and several small islands under U.S. jurisdiction.

Initially every household will be mailed a questionnaire, which will ask up to fifty-three questions. The answers, which go beyond the purpose of determining the number of seats allowed in the House of Representatives, will help determine important statistical information for entities, which in turn will make decisions in assisting the citizens' future.

Title 13 of the United States code protects the privacy of all answers. No personal information can be released for 72 years. I'm sure that some citizens will have difficulty divulging information just as did citizens of the first census 220 years ago.

PLACER COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY DUES ARE DUE BARBARA VAN RIPER ACTING MEMBERSHIP CHAIR

Dues will be payable beginning May 1 to July 1, 2000 for 5-1 through 5-1, 2001. Regular membership is \$10.00; family 15.00; life \$200.00. Your dues provide you with a copy of The Placer with news of what is going on in the different societies and the Museum, as well as historical articles of interest. Yours dues and donations help our society to continue with the publication of historical books, place plaques on historic landmarks and do Oral Histories of the "Old Timers" of Auburn and surrounding areas. If dues are not received by July 1, you will be dropped from the mailing list.

PCHS NOMINATING COMMITTEE BY BARBARA VAN RIPER

At the April 6 dinner meeting, the following nominees will be voted upon: George Lay, President; Addah Owens, Vice President; Karen Locher, Secretary; Al Stoll, Treasurer. Board of Directors: Wes Briggs, Lila Swesey and Jim Landrith. For Membership Chairman,

Barbara Burdick. Nominations will be accepted from the floor. Nominating Committee: Barbara Van Riper, Chair, 885-2074, Lee Aplin, Karri Samson, Smith Virgil and Norman Wilson.

**PLACER COUNTY
HISTORICAL SOCIETY
DINNER MEETING
BY ADDAH OWENS**

WHEN: April 6, 2000
TIME: 6:30 PM Dinner; 7:30 PM Program
WHERE: Veteran's Memorial Hall, 100 East Street, Auburn, California
COST: \$10.00
MENU: Pork Loin Dinner and a Delightful Dessert!

MAIL CHECK TO: PCHS, c/o Betty Samson, 8780 Baxter Grade Road, Auburn, CA 95603

PROGRAM

The speaker will be Jack Steed, author of *The Donner Party Rescue Site, Johnson's Ranch on Bear River*. For thousands of emigrants, Johnson's Ranch meant the end of the 2,000 mile trail, the first settlement in California, and the beginning of a new life.

It is surprising that the site of the historic adobe and other ranch structures had been lost until rediscovered in the 1980's by Jack and Richard Steed, after zealous field and archival research. Their book tells the story of the ranch and of the suspenseful research leading to the rediscovery of the emigrant trail site.

The ranch and its fame, the Donner Party rescue, personal insights into the events of the times, the rush to the gold country, the reason for building the army post (Camp Far West), the confusion surrounding the disappearance of the ranch and then its rediscovery in 1985 will be the topic of his program. Jack will also bring with him a display of artifacts recovered from the ranch site, including some historic weapons.

Jack and Richard received the *Award of Merit for Historic Preservation* of the Sacramento County Historical Society. They have also received the Oregon-California Trails Association's highest honor, the *Award of Meritorious Achievement*.

In October of 1992, PBS from New York aired a program entitled, *The Donner Party*, which used pictures and references from his book.

A reminder not to delay in mailing your dinner reservation check to Betty Samson. Our last three dinner/programs have sold out in five days.

**PLACER COUNTY HISTORICAL
SOCIETY NEW MEMBERS
BY BARBARA BURDICK**

The Placer County Historical Society is pleased to welcome the following new members:

Janice Murch of Auburn
Dot Tweedy of Sacramento
A. Dale Johnson of Nevada City

**PLACER COUNTY HISTORICAL
SOCIETY COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN**

Membership – Barbara Burdick
Telephone: 530-885-4202
Historian/Archivist – Karri Samson
Telephone: 530-885-5074
Landmark Committee – Doris Viera
Telephone: 530-885-2797
Oral History – Betty Samson
Telephone: 530-885-5074
Photo-Archives -Gene Scott
Telephone: 530-885-8501
Programs – Addah Owens
Telephone: 530-885-8347
Sesquicentennial & Book Committee –
Donna Howell
Telephone: 530-885-2891
Barbara Van Riper
Telephone: 530-885-2074

**CONTRIBUTIONS TO *THE PLACER* ARE
SOUGHT**

The Placer is a bimonthly newsletter edited and published by the Placer County Department of Museums in cooperation with the Placer County Historical Society. We are working to make *The Placer* an information source that serves all of the historical organizations in Placer County.

We would welcome short articles on your organization's upcoming events or on topics of historical interest.

Please submit all material to Doris Parker at the Placer County Department of Museums. We prefer that you send the information by e-mail or on computer disk, however we will accept written or faxed material. E-mail your material to dparker@placer.ca.gov. Send hard copy to Doris at 101 Maple Street, Auburn, CA 95603. Our fax number is (530) 889-6510. **The deadline for material for the next *The Placer* is April 24, 2000.**
